

In regard to seasonal remissions, the rules on this coast of the Presidency are different from those in other parts of the Presidency and seasonal remissions are generally unknown in this coast, as rainfall is generally constant. But our rules provide for grant of remissions when there are widespread calamities from unforeseen inundations, &c. If the people can satisfy the Government that there is justification for the grant of that concession, Government would certainly be glad to do what they can in the matter. As regards the cocoanut pest, the Director of Agriculture seems to have been doing something through his department, and he complains that the ryots do not fully co-operate with him by following up his advice to the very letter. I hope that the Director and the ryots would co-operate better and will do all in their power to stamp out the disease as quickly as possible.

I am very glad that the proposal to levy an income tax meets with approval from all quarters.

4. The undesirability of increasing taxation.

Mr. K. Velayudhan Pillai (Member, Municipal Council, Haripad) remarked that the prosperity of a country depended upon its affluent circumstances and that the replenishment of the State Treasury was to be effected not by levying additional taxes on the people. There was a time in Travancore when there were not even sufficient funds to meet the expenses of the Army, but that state of affairs had ceased to exist long ago. He observed that a comparison of the revenues of the State for the years 1083 and 1095 would clearly show that the main heads under which there had been great increases of income were the Land Revenue, Stamps, Customs, Excise, Forest and Registration, and that the financial position of the State was satisfactory. The explanation generally offered by the Government that there were no funds to carry out reforms did not therefore seem tenable. If there were no funds to meet the ever increasing demands of a progressive administration, it was due to the wasteful expenditure incurred by the Government in certain directions. Every reorganisation required money and the additional funds were met by levying taxes on the poor ryots. The Departments of Police, Excise, Education and Judicial were reorganised in recent years, and one peculiar feature of those reforms was that the pay of the higher officers whose pay was already comparatively higher than the pay given in Japan was still further increased, leaving the lower ranks of the services helpless.

The Member next referred to the expenditure in the P. W. D. He remarked that in 1094 the proportion of salaries paid to officers to the cost of the execution of works was in the ratio of 3: 11. Expenditure on account of salaries to officers was very high. Further, large sums were being spent annually on the construction and maintenance of large buildings.

The Member then objected to certain additional burdens laid on the people during the present regime. He dealt with them more or less on the same lines as the previous speaker. He also objected to the recent slight increase in the Anchal rates. He said that the Government's insistence on municipalities increasing taxes was not in keeping with the theory of their financial independence. He objected to the levy of a tax on market places in proportion to the area occupied, and to the introduction of a ferry tax and vehicle license fees.

Continuing, the Member stated that the main object of the successive administrations seemed to be to show greater income. The selling away in auction of the tanks in South Travancore, the registry of puduval lands at low rates, and the assignment as puduvals of the backwaters which rendered great service to the country as drainage areas, &c., were quoted as instances in support of that view. In his opinion, it was necessary to have an Executive Council in the State, as the majority of the Dewans were appointed from the British service and so were without adequate experience of local affairs. He also observed that it was necessary to have a non-official majority in the Legislative Council.

He hoped that the Report of the Salaries' Committee would be published in the Gazette with a view to afford the people an opportunity to give their opinion.

The Member further stated that adequate funds were not sanctioned for the progress and development of the Agricultural department. He believed that, if the lands in the State were cultivated on scientific lines, and if the Government lands in the hilly tracts and by the sides of the backwaters were cultivated by the Government direct, there would be no necessity to import paddy.

He did not think that the re-settlement which would commence from 1100 M. E., would be necessary, if it be to establish the proprietary rights of the owners, as the present Assistant Tahsildars would be quite sufficient for the purpose. If it be to increase the land tax, he said that the re-settlement was undesirable, as it would be throwing an additional burden on the already oppressed ryots.

Devan's reply.—Most of the points referred to by the Member have been already replied to. The other matters referred to by him will receive due consideration.

5. Necessity for the establishment of a State Bank.

Mr. Nainan Eippu (Member, Trading Classes, Kottayam) thanked the Government for taking steps to depute an officer to study the system of State Banks in Mysore and Baroda. He, therefore, wished only to make a few observations regarding the State Bank to be started in Travancore. Branches of the State Bank should be opened as early as possible in the important trading centres, such as Quilon, Kottayam and Alleppey, and in other places decided upon by the Government. The Government should lend money at reasonable rates of interest from the State Bank to the native banks in proportion to the capital of the latter. Government should also fix a standard rate in the matter of discount, commission, interest, &c. With a view to encourage industrial education in the country, capable and qualified young men should be employed as officers in the Bank. He also advocated that, with the establishment of the State Bank, Government funds should not be invested outside Travancore.

Sahib Bahadur N. Siddick Sait (Member, Municipal Council, Kayankulam) said that, as Government had already taken steps in the matter, he had not anything more to say than to convey his thanks to Government for the action taken.

Devan's reply.—The State has already taken steps to depute an officer to visit Mysore and Baroda and to study the working of the State Banks there. On his return the Government will consider what further action they should take in the matter.

II. MAIN HEADS OF REVENUE.

(1) LAND REVENUE.

6. The difficulties experienced in the matter of puduval registry and the need for postponing the passing of the Revised Puduval Rules till the necessary modifications are effected.

Mr. Mathevan Krishnan (Member, Neyyattinkara Taluk) first spoke about the Land Assignment Bill. The Bill, though strongly opposed by the non-official Members of the Legislative Council, had been accepted by the Council and referred to a Select Committee, on the understanding that the necessary modifications might be made in the Committee and subsequently in the Council. It was of the utmost importance that the defective and objectionable portions in the Bill and in the Puduval Rules should be expunged or suitably modified, and the important provisions relating to principles embodied in the Bill and a few clauses for regulating the procedure alone issued in the form of Rules. The definition given in Section 2 of the Bill appears to include, under poramboke, the tanks, canals, bunds, banks, pathways, etc., forming part of registered holdings. The same provision occurred in Section 3 of the Land Conservancy Regulation. The definition should be altered so as to make it inapplicable to private tanks, canals, etc. Section 5, Clause 2, and the exception thereto enunciated an altogether new provision, namely, that a registry would not be complete until the patta or other title deed was granted. The statement of objects and reasons appended to the Bill